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Sawbridgeworth Urban District.



Annual Report

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For 1925.

BISHOP'S STORTFORD :

MARDON BROS., "OBSERVER" PRINTING WORKS, NORTH STREET.

1926.

THE ELMS,

SAWBRIDGEWORTH,

July 24th, 1926.

GENTLEMEN,

I have much pleasure in presenting to you my Annual Report for 1925.

The Vital Statistics were satisfactory. The Death Rate—10.5—compares favourably with that of the smaller Towns of England and Wales. The Birth Rate—19.7—is higher than it has been for many years. The Infantile Death Rate was 21.2—only one death occurred in infants under one year of age.

The general health of the Town was very good, and there is nothing concerning the Public Health to which I would particularly draw your attention.

I again thank Mr. Morris and Mr. Watts for their co-operation and assistance.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ETHELBERT COLLINS.

Sawbridgeworth Urban District.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health for 1925.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to you my Annual Report on the health of your Town.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	2590
Population (at the Census of 1921)	...	...	...	...	2295
Population (estimated 1925)	...	...	...	...	2380

The Town of Sawbridgeworth is situated on high ground, with an elevation of 200 feet above the sea level. It is bounded on the N.E., E. and S. by the river Stort, and extends on the N. and W. into a plateau. The soil is gravel, and, in the low lying parts of the District, heavy clay. There is little protection afforded by woods or forests, the atmosphere is particularly free from pollution, hence the climate is distinctly bracing and healthy.

Number of Inhabited Houses (1921)	...	...	...	565
Number of Families or separate Occupiers (1921)	...	...	...	585
Rateable Value and sum represented by a Penny	...	...	...	£18,025—£45

The working class population of the District comprises about three-quarters of the total population, and the principal occupations in which the working classes are engaged are malt making, horticulture and agriculture. There is no particular occupation which has an adverse influence on public health,

Vital Statistics.

			Total.	M.	F.	
Births	{ Legitimate	...	46	22	24	Birth Rate 19.7
	{ Illegitimate	...	1	1	0	
Deaths	...	...	25	10	5	Death Rate 10.5
Deaths of Infants under one year of age...					...	1 (Legitimate).
Infantile Death Rate 21.2.						

The Vital Statistics are satisfactory.

The amount of Poor Law Relief required is moderate ; Hospital and other forms of gratuitous medical relief are utilised to only a small extent.

No special causes of sickness or invalidity have been noteworthy during the year, nor have any conditions of occupation or environment had a prejudicial effect on health.

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority or by the County Council :—

- (1) Tuberculosis.—The Ware Park Sanatorium at Ware, with ample accommodation for males, females and children.
- (2) Maternity.—None.
- (3) Children.—None.
- (4) Fever.—Joint Isolation Hospital at Bishop's Stortford, partly supported by the Local Authority. Accommodation : Scarlet Fever 15 beds, Diphtheria 8 beds, and a convalescent block.
- (5) Smallpox.—There is a Smallpox Hospital outside the District, partly supported by the Local Authority. Accommodation : 12 beds.
- (6) The Bishop's Stortford Hospital.—For accidents and acute surgical cases.
- (7) The Bishop's Stortford Workhouse Infirmary. —For poor people requiring hospital treatment or skilled nursing.

There are no Hospitals in the area.

There is no Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the area.

Ambulance facilities.—(a) For infectious cases provided by the Joint Isolation Hospital Committee. (b) For non-infectious and accident cases can be hired from Guardians' Institution at Bishop's Stortford.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.—

Maternity and Child Welfare Centres : None.

Day Nurseries : None.

School Clinics : None.

Tuberculosis Dispensaries : None.

Treatment Centres for Venereal Diseases : Several of the London Hospitals, by arrangement made by the County Council.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority.—There are two Public Health Officers of the Local Authority :

(1) The Medical Officer of Health.

(2) The Sanitary Inspector.

Both are part time Officers, to whose salary contribution is made under the Public Health Acts. The Medical Officer holds an appointment under the Poor Law, and also the office of H.M. Coroner. The Sanitary Inspector holds no other public office.

Professional Nursing in the Home.—(a) General. This is undertaken by two District Nurses. The nursing is provided by the Sawbridgeworth Nursing Association, which is supported by voluntary subscriptions and fees from patients. The Board of Guardians and the Local Authority are subscribers. (b) For Infectious Diseases, *e.g.*, Measles, Nurses are provided by the County Council.

Midwives.—The two District Nurses, who are registered Midwives, are the only practising Midwives in the District.

Chemical Work.—No arrangements in force.

Legislation in force.—General adoptive acts and byelaws in force in the area are those pertaining to the control of the following:—Bakehouses, Dairies, Cowsheds, Milk Shops, Slaughterhouses, Bootmakers, Tailors, Dressmakers, Builders, Wheelwrights, Millers, Blacksmiths, and Maltings. The provisions became operative 29th September, 1903. Building byelaws became operative 18th April, 1903. The administration is in the hands of the Sanitary Inspector.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.—The District has a constant supply of water of excellent quality and purity from the mains of the Herts and Essex Waterworks Company. The source of the water supply is from the deep wells of the Company sunk into the chalk. There is no possibility of contamination.

The total population of the District, with the exception of Spelbrook, is supplied from the works.

SPELBROOK, the detached part of the District, one-and-a-half miles distant from the main part of the District, with 30 houses and cottages, and a population of 120, obtains its water supply from shallow wells. The water is "surface water" and the possibility of its becoming polluted is always present.

Rivers and Streams.—The river Stort and the streams running into it, are fairly free from pollution. The source of pollution, if any, is from the effluent of the filter beds. The officials of the Lea Conservancy are constantly inspecting any possible source of pollution, and samples of the sewage effluent are frequently subjected to analysis.

Drainage and Sewerage.—The bulk of the sewage is carried by gravitation to the Disposal Works and is treated in a septic tank and bacterial beds. The purified effluent passes into an open ditch and thence into the river Stort. The Drainage Scheme and Sewage Disposal Works were completed in 1911 and have since been working satisfactorily. Spelbrook has cesspool drainage.

Closet Accommodation.—There are but few houses in the District that are not furnished with water closets and flushing cisterns. Earth closets are used in the outlying part of the District at Spelbrook, where there is no main water supply and no modern system of drainage.

Scavenging.—Dry house refuse is collected once a week by the Public Scavenger and is deposited on a waste piece of ground at a farm a mile away from the populous part of the District. The earth closets, ashpits and cesspools at Spelbrook are emptied and dealt with by the occupiers of the premises. Ashbins with proper covering are provided for nearly all the houses in the District. During recent years 50 ashbins have been substituted for fixed receptacles.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.—The inspection of the District has been carried out systematically by myself and the Sanitary Inspector. Nuisances detected or complained of are dealt with by the Sanitary Inspector and abated.

SUMMARY OF WORK done by A. T. WATTS in the Sawbridgeworth Urban District during the Year ending December 31st, 1925.

Particulars.	Total Number for the Year.		
Nuisances detected	40	
Nuisances abated	40	
Notices served...	...	None	
Cottages Inspected	300	
Slaughterhouses Inspected	2	
Bakehouses Inspected	4	
Workshops Inspected	12	
Cottages Closed	None	
Cowsheds Inspected	12	} Including those outside the Urban Area, and sel- ling milk in Sawbr'w'th.
Dairies Inspected	12	
Overcrowding abated	6	
Houses placed in Habitable Repair	12		
Houses connected with Sewers			
Houses connected with Water			
Mains	
Privies and W.C.'s repaired	8	
W.C. supplied with Water	...		
Wells Cleaned or Repaired	1	Spelbrook Spring.
Wells Sunk	1	Spelbrook.
Wells Closed	None	
Pumps Repaired...	...	1	Spelbrook.

A. T. WATTS.

Smoke Abatement.—Nuisance from smoke does not occur.

Premises and Occupations which can be controlled by Byelaws or Regulations.—

Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	5
Slaughterhouse	...	...	...	...	1
Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	3
Bootmakers	...	...	...	...	4
Tailors	...	...	...	...	2
Dressmakers	...	...	...	...	6
Harnessmaker	...	...	...	...	1
Builders	...	...	...	...	2
Wheelwrights	...	...	...	...	2
Miller	...	...	...	...	1
Blacksmiths, Bicycle Repairers, Tinsmiths and Engineers	...	...	...	...	4
Maltings	...	...	...	...	7
Total					38

Other Sanitary Conditions requiring Notice.—None.

Schools.—The sanitary condition and water supply of the three Public Elementary Schools in the District are satisfactory.

The action taken in relation to the health of the scholars and for preventing the spread of infectious disease :

- (1) Routine inspection of scholars by the School Medical Inspector.
- (2) Inspection of the children at school and in their homes by the District Nurses.
- (3) Reports received from the teachers of suspicious cases.
- (4) By exclusion from school of infected scholars and contacts.
- (5) Closure of the school when necessary.
- (6) By a systematic inspection of the scholars by myself during epidemics, *i.e.*, scarlet fever.

Housing.

I—General Housing Conditions in the Area.

- (1) There are 612 houses in the District of which 430 are occupied by the working classes.
- (2) (a) A shortage of houses of a moderate rental suitable for the working classes exists to the number of 50 or more.
- (b) It is proposed to erect a small number of cottages under the “Housing (assisted scheme) Regulations, 1919.”
- (3) There have been no important changes in the population during the year, a steady increase is anticipated.

II—Overcrowding.

- (1) Does not exist to a large extent.
- (2) The causes are shortage of houses, and in certain cases the cottages are too small to accommodate a large family.
- (3) It is proposed to erect suitable cottages, which is the only means of dealing with overcrowding.
- (4) In a few cases lodgers have been requested to leave their lodgings on account of overcrowding.

III—Fitness of Houses.

- (1) (a) Of the 430 dwellings of the working classes 130 are very good, 100 good, and 200 very old cottages are of a low standard.
- (b) The general character of the defects found to exist in unfit houses is due to age, dilapidation, dampness, insufficient window space, and smallness of rooms.
- (c) The defects are not due to lack of proper management and supervision by owners, nor to neglect by tenants.

- (2) General action taken as regards unfit houses under—
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (a) the Public Health Acts | } No action has been taken. |
| (b) the Housing Acts | |
- (3) Owing to the shortage of houses it is impossible to issue closing orders, and it would be impossible to remedy the unfitness of many of the cottages during occupation. There are no back to back houses in the area.
- (4) Conditions as regards water supply, closet accommodation and refuse disposal are quite satisfactory.

IV—Unhealthy Areas.—There are no unhealthy areas.

V—Byelaws Relating to Houses, etc.

- (1) The existing byelaws work satisfactorily.
- (2) The need for new byelaws or revision of existing byelaws is unnecessary.

VI—General and Miscellaneous.

Under the Public Health Acts insanitary property has, as far as possible, been remedied, and overcrowding has been dealt with to a certain extent.

Housing Statistics for the Year 1925.

Number of New Houses erected during the year.

- (a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b))—12.
- (l) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :
- (1) By the Local Authority—None.
 - (2) By other bodies or persons—8.

I—Unfit Dwelling-houses.

Inspection.

- (1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)—70.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925—300.
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation—None.
- (4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation—12.

II—Remedy of Defects with service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers—12.

III—Action under Statutory Powers.

- (a) Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925—None.
- (b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.
 - (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied—6.
 - (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices.
 - (a) By owners—6.
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners—None.
 - (c) Proceedings under Sections 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925—None.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.*(a)—Milk Supply.*

The wholesomeness of the milk produced within or brought into the area, is satisfactory. There are six purveyors of milk who distribute milk twice daily from door to door. The Dairies and Cowsheds are inspected by the Sanitary Inspector.

- (1) Action taken as to tuberculous milk or tuberculous cattle—None.
- (2) Number of licences granted for the sale of milk under special designations, classified as in the Fourth Schedule to the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1923—6. No pasteurised milk is sold in the area.
- (3) Refusal or revocation of registration of retailers or of licences for graded milk—None.
- (4) The summarised results of the bacteriological examination of samples of graded or other milk—None.

(b)—Meat.

- (1) The Sanitary Inspector carries out the duties of Meat Inspector, and arrangements are made by him with the owner of the one licensed slaughterhouse in the district for inspection at the time of slaughter. No disease in meat has been detected and no arrangements have been made for the disposal of condemned meat.
- (2) Administration of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, as regards stalls, shops, stores and vehicles, is under the supervision of the Meat Inspector and the Regulations are adhered to.

(3) There are no public slaughterhouses.

Number of private slaughterhouses.

		In 1920.		In Jan., 1925.		In Dec., 1925.
Registered	...	1	...	1	...	1
Licensed	...	0	...	0	...	0
		—		—		—
Total	...	1	...	1	...	1
		—		—		—

(c)—*Other Foods.*

No unsound food has been discovered by the Inspector. The sanitary conditions of bakehouses and other premises where foods are manufactured, prepared, stored or exposed for sale are satisfactory. The existing powers have been found adequate for dealing with the sanitary conditions in such places.

(d)—No case of food poisoning has been brought to my notice.

Prevalence of, and Control Over, Infectious Diseases.

Notifiable infectious diseases during the period since 1920 have not been prevalent. There has been no epidemic of any notifiable infectious disease.

A supply of diphtheria anti-toxin, provided by the Local Authority, is always available both for prophylaxis and for treatment, and is always administered in every suspicious case. One case of encephalitis lethargica, which proved fatal, was notified. No "return" cases of scarlet fever were discovered. Cases of pneumonia are regularly notified, but no cases of malaria, dysentery and trench fever have occurred in the District.

Specimens requiring bacteriological examination are sent to the Clinical Research Association. Throat swabs of every suspected case of diphtheria are submitted to examination.

Cases of diphtheria and scarlet fever are conveyed by ambulance to the Joint Isolation Hospital at Bishop's Stortford.

The premises from which an infectious patient has been removed are at once disinfected under the supervision of the Sanitary Officer. Infected clothing, bedding and other articles are disinfected at the Isolation Hospital by a steam disinfecter.

No use has been made of the Schick and Dick tests in diphtheria and scarlet fever nor of the artificial methods of immunization against these diseases.

No primary vaccinations and re-vaccinations were performed by me in my capacity of M.O.H.

Non-notifiable infectious diseases have not been present in an epidemic form. School intimations of disease are at once investigated.

Influenza has not been prevalent and no fatal case has occurred.

There were three deaths from cancer during the year; no case of anthrax or rabies has been in the District.

Facilities for the cleansing and disinfection of verminous persons are available and are made use of at the Bishop's Stortford Workhouse. Premises and articles which have been exposed to infection are disinfected under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) during the Year 1925.

Disease.					Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Small-pox	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	11	11	0
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	1	0	0

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1925.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0								
1								
5								
10								
15								
20								
25	1							
35	1	1						
45								
55								
65 & upwards							1	
Totals	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.

The necessity has not arisen for taking action under these Regulations, relating to tuberculosis employees in the milk trade.

Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62.

No action taken during 1925.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

No case of puerperal fever or of ophthalmia neonatorum was notified during the year. There were a few cases of measles, no whooping cough, no epidemic diarrhoea, and no other infectious diseases of parturient women, infants, and young children.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1925 for the Urban District of Sawbridgeworth on the Administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901,

IN CONNECTION WITH

Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

1. INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

	Premises.	Inspections.	Number of Written Notices.	Prosecutions.
FACTORIES (Including Factory Laundries)
WORKSHOPS (Including Workshop Laundries)	...	70	None.	None.
WORKPLACES (Other than Outworkers' premises)	...	70	None.	None.
Total	140		

2. DEFECTS FOUND IN FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Particulars.	Number of Defects Found.
<i>Nuisances under the Public Health Acts :—*</i>	
Want of cleanliness	None.
Want of ventilation	None.
Overcrowding	None.
Want of drainage of floors	None.
Other Nuisances	None.
Sanitary accommodation { insufficient... ..	None.
{ unsuitable or defective	None.
{ not separate for sexes	None.

Offences under the Factory and Workshop Acts :—

Illegal occupation of underground bakehouse (s. 101)	None.
Other offences	None.
(Excluding offences relating to outwork and offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921).	

*Including those specified in sections 2, 3, 7 and 8 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, as remediable under the Public Health Acts.

ETHELBERT COLLINS,

Medical Officer of Health.

July 24th, 1926.



